

A Bibliography for A Few Nonfiction Text Sets to Support Argument Essay Writing in Middle School

The following are a few text sets to support your work in the Argument Essay unit. The sets represent a variety of viewpoints on high-interest topics that are relevant to curriculum in science, social studies, and current events. Of course, you should feel free to seek out other topics and text sets, and to adapt the articles below to fit the needs of your students. Some texts are from Upfront Magazine or CNN news, and you will want to consider the age of your students, as texts that may be appropriate for eighth graders may not be appropriate for sixth.

Health and Wellness

An article on the controversy over potatoes in school lunches:

<http://www.timeforkids.com/news/hot-potato-issue/16206>

An article on the pros and cons of banning chocolate milk in schools:

http://www.usatoday.com/money/industries/food/2011-05-09-chocolate-milk-bans_n.htm

Information about the health benefits of chocolate milk from Trumoo:

<http://www.trumoo.com/nutrition/benefits/>

An article from *whymilk.com* on the link between flavored milk and increased milk consumption:

http://www.whymilk.com/studies_print.php?study=milk_consumption_in_schools_dropped

An article on maintaining a healthy diet: “Healthy Eating”

http://portal.acs.org/portal/acs/corg/content?_nfpb=true&_pageLabel=PP_SUPERARTICLE&node_id=1758&use_sec=false&sec_url_var=region1&_uuid=b9bbb526-349d-4cb4-8ec1-9f6ee721ff31

A video clip about the politics behind school lunches:

November 16, 2011, “School lunches and child abuse, Washington-style”

<http://thelastword.msnbc.msn.com/?videoDate=20111116>

Recycling

Recycling facts for kids:

<http://www.chevroncars.com/learn/wondrous-world/recycling-facts>

Information about waste and recycling:

<http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/caer/ce/eeek/earth/recycle/waste.htm#save>

An article about recycling: “Recycling-Chemistry Can”

http://portal.acs.org/portal/acs/corg/content?_nfpb=true&_pageLabel=PP_SUPERARTICLE&node_id=1758&use_sec=false&sec_url_var=region1&_uuid=b9bbb526-349d-4cb4-8ec1-9f6ee721ff31

An article about the waste produced by plastic water bottles:

<http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/kids/stories/spacescience/water-bottle-pollution/>

A news clip that argues recycling is the “lazy” way of saving our planet:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gVS3O5vxpJI&feature=related>

An article on the problems with plastic, and attempts to create a viable replacement:
<http://www.sciencenewsforkids.org/2011/07/plant-powered-plastics/>

An article that argues recycling is a waste of time, money and energy:
<http://mises.org/daily/1911>

Censorship

An article about attempts to ban Harry Potter books in schools:
<http://childrensbooks.about.com/cs/censorship/a/banharry.htm>

Ways kids can join the fight for free speech:
<http://www.kidspeakonline.org/whatcanido.html>

An article about the freedom to read:
<http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/article/freedom-read>

An article about Facebook and free speech:
<http://www.allfacebook.com/study-facebook-teaches-kids-freedom-of-speech-2011-09>

An article on finding age-appropriate books for readers:
<http://www.scholastic.com/resources/article/books-for-kids/>

An article about parents attempting to ban one of their child's summer reading books:
<http://www.postandcourier.com/news/2011/sep/24/parents-say-book-inappropriate-for-teens/>

Video of a local school board meeting on the book ban of Bless Me, Ultima:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5i_lf5zOY6Q

Green Energy

The pros and cons of solar energy:
http://www.clean-energy-ideas.com/articles/pros_and_cons_of_solar_energy.html

An argument against solar panels for aesthetic purposes:
<http://www.infrastructurist.com/2011/03/29/get-your-ugly-solar-panel-off-my-pristine-utility-pole/>

An article on one negative effect of alternative energy sources:
<http://www.foxnews.com/scitech/2011/11/05/wind-farms-disrupting-radar-scientists-say/>

A video on alternative energy:
<http://video.nationalgeographic.com/video/player/environment/energy-environment/alternative-energy.html>

An article about President Obama's promotion of clean energy:
<http://www.scholastic.com/browse/article.jsp?id=3756003>

An article about urban farms:
<http://www.sciencenewsforkids.org/2008/10/farms-sprout-in-cities-2/>

Child Soldiers

One of the earliest articles for teens to call attention to the plight and spread of child soldiers
***Upfront Magazine* (April 20, 2009) "Armed and Underage."**

http://teacher.scholastic.com/scholasticnews/indepth/upfront/features/index.asp?article=f042009_Armed

The efforts of the youth movement Invisible Children, to alleviate the suffering of displaced and child soldiers, and the 'night communing' in Uganda – videos and digital text

<http://www.invisiblechildren.com>

especially: <http://www.invisiblechildren.com/videos/3765452> 'I got soul but I'm not a soldier'

United Nation's speaker Ishmael Beah's memoir, written when he was twenty six, of being a child soldier in Sierra Leone, and his eventual escape to the United States

***A Long Way Gone*, by Ishmael Beah**

http://www.alongwaygone.com/long_way_gone.html

Ishmael Beah on CBS News with Katie Couric

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ozsOLdgp_y0

Ishmael Beah interview

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5K4yhPSQEzo>

UN Statistics on Child Soldiers

<http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/briefing/soldiers/soldiers.pdf>

Occupy Wall Street

Wikipedia entry for "Occupy Wall Street," very long overview of the movement

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_Wall_Street

Sept 28 – DAILY NEWS, "Occupy Wall Street Protesters Are Behaving Like A Bunch of Spoiled Brats"

http://articles.nydailynews.com/2011-09-28/news/30236515_1_pepper-spray-nypd-parade-route

Oct 10 – USA Today, "Occupy Wall Street is 2nd American Revolution"

<http://www.usatoday.com/news/opinion/forum/story/2011-10-11/occupy-wall-street-revolution/50721480/1>

Oct 12 – USA Today, "Editorial: Five Good Reasons Why Wall Street Breeds Protesters"

<http://www.usatoday.com/news/opinion/editorials/story/2011-10-11/Occupy-Wall-Street-protesters/50735960/1>

Nov 17 – USA TODAY Blog – "Occupy Protesters Try to Keep Movement Going," Describing 'Day of Action' and including differing points of view on the movement

<http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/story/2011-11-17/occupy-protests-anniversary/51263656/1>

Nov 17 – CBS NEWS Blog Video “Arrests made during Occupy Wall Street’s ‘Day of Action,’” no commentary or reporting only video feed of mostly peaceful arrests
<http://www.cbsnews.com/video/watch/?id=7388799n>

Nov 18 - TIME magazine blog TEXT AND VIDEO post, starting off positively supporting the movement but then criticizing some of their more recent activities
<http://swampland.time.com/2011/11/18/occupy-wall-streets-day-off-message/>

Nov 18 - ABC News “Occupy Protests Across the Country Take Toll on City Budgets,” description of costs from various cities of police response and some varying points of view on those numbers
<http://abcnews.go.com/Business/occupy-wall-street-protests-cost-cities-millions/story?id=14975940>

Nov 18 – Wall Street Journal Video Blog “Opinion Journal” – “Obamaville Rage,” editorial board member and a columnist against the OWS movement speak
<http://online.wsj.com/video/opinion-obamaville-rage/62319A01-95F7-426F-8525-70486205A4BD.html?KEYWORDS=occupy+wall+street>

Nov 19 - Newt Gingrich at Republican Forum – VIDEO - “Go get a job right after you take a bath”
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jckR3YaFLxE>

SATIRE – The Onion – Nov 15, “Magnanimous Banker Hires Occupy Wall Street Protesters” (CAUTION: OTHER SATIRICAL ARTICLES ON The Onion’s WEBSITE MAY CONTAIN ADULT TOPICS AND CONTENT)
<http://www.theonion.com/articles/magnanimous-banker-hires-occupy-wall-street-protes,26666/>